



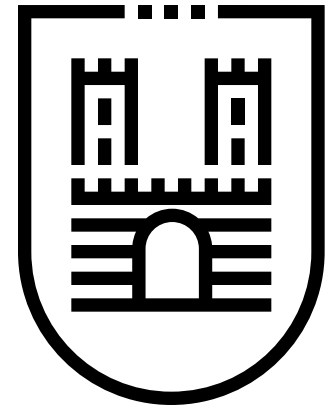
Kalisz

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Kalisz

*- the oldest
Polish city*





Kalisz

It is the second biggest city in Wielkopolska region, situated in the Valley of Prosna River. Kalisia, as one of the places on the amber route, was mentioned for the first time in the work of the Alexandrian scholar Ptolemy around the 2nd century A.D. According to the scholars, Kalisia of Ptolemy can be identified with today's Kalisz. This record made Kalisz be proud of the oldest written certificate from among Polish cities. The favourable location at the crossroads of the trade routes from the north to the south and from the west to the east of the continent favoured the development of Kalisz and its openness to newcomers representing various peoples, nations, religions and cultures.

An Early Medieval burg city in Zawodzie (9th/10th -13th century) was one of the greatest Piast town centres. After 1233 a Silesian Duke Henry the Bearded relocated the settling centre of Kalisz into a new place north to Zawodzie.

About 1257 a prince Bolesław the Pious founded Kalisz in accordance with the Środa law. The internal area of the city was characterised by a spindle-like layout of two market streets, with cross streets and a rectangular square situated in the centre. This medieval town design has remained until present times.

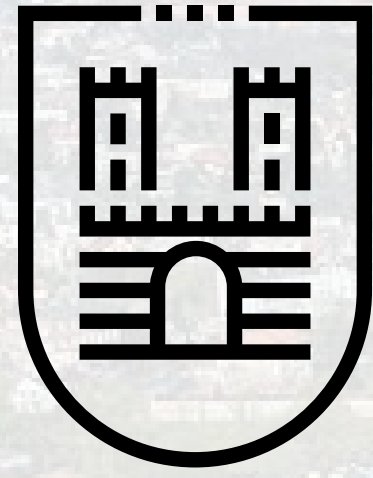
World War one left its tragic stamp on Kalisz. In August 1914 Prussian army obliterated and burnt the town. 95% of old-town buildings laid in ruins. Restoration of the town between 1920s and 1930s was the first such a venture nationwide. The old-town centre was reconstructed according to restoration guidelines and spatial arrangement, although historic buildings were not reconstructed.

During World War Two Kalisz was incorporated into an area that was called "Warthegau" by the Germans. The Nazi occupation was a period of oppression and discrimination for Kalisz people.

Post-war years were marked by the development of industry, city infrastructure and social-cultural development. In 1992 Kalisz diocese was established. Undoubtedly, one of the most important events in the history of the city was a visit of Pope John Paul II (4th June 1997) during the 5th pilgrimage to his native country.

Modern Kalisz covers an area of 70 km², with app. 110 thousand residents. Between 1975 and 1998 it was a capital city of Kalisz Voivodeship. In a new administrative division the city is located in Wielkopolskie Voivodeship. Kalisz enchants with its magic beauty. Here, the past and the present are intertwined and forms a unique climate here.





Kalisz

Add your story

*Most
important
monuments*



Town Hall in Kalisz

This is the third building of the town hall. It was built between 1920 and 1925. It is of a Renaissance style. It ends with a high tower with a magnificent clock - the heart of the building. The clock astonishes with its precision of mechanical heart, supported by electric engine. In the tower there is an exhibition showing the stormy history of the city. The hidden treasure of the town hall is its marvellous patio with a monument of Flora which was removed from the city park which holds now its copy. Inside the Town Hall we can also find a maquettes of the existing and non-existing buildings, related to the town's history and panoramic painting which portrays Kalisz from the turn of the 18th century.



Wojciech Boguslawski Theatre in Kalisz

The third building of the Kalisz's theatre, built in 1936, using burned walls from the previous building from the 19th century, proudly reflecting in the waters of the Prosna River.

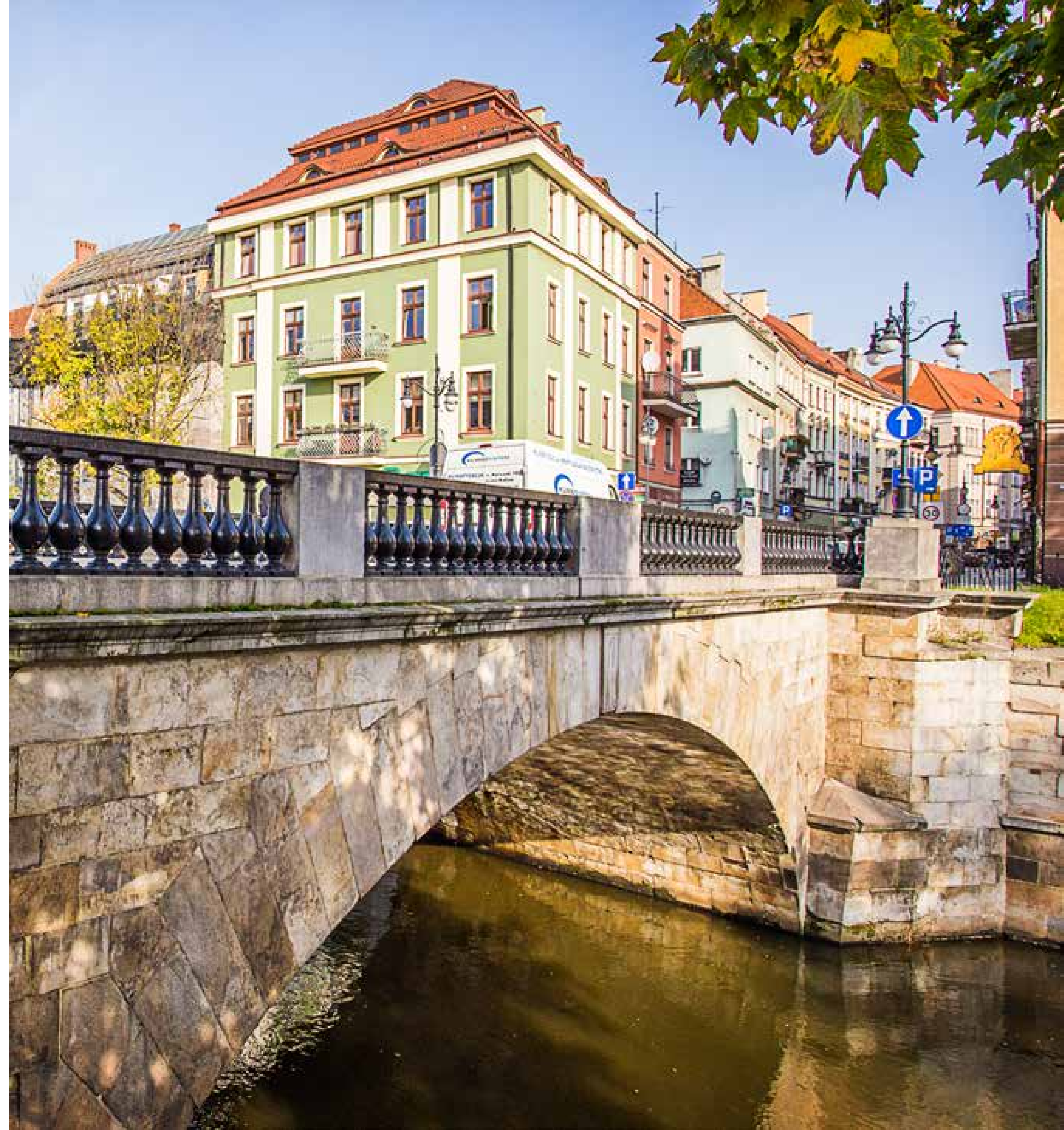
However theatric traditions in Kalisz are date back to 1800, when Wojciech Boguslawski-polish actor,theatre director and playwrighter,called "Father of Polish Theatre" played first theatric spectacle in the city. One year later, he built wooden, at the time, theatre building at present crossroad of streets-Babina and Kilinski Place. The building had failed to stand the test of time, and was relocated to the beutifull square near the Prosna River, thus where it stands today.

The theatre can accommodate about 400 people in the Big Stage and about 100 people in the Small Stage on Teatralna street. It put on various plays by polish and foreign authors and has constant actor team.



Stone Bridge

This is the oldest and most beautiful bridge in Kalisz. It was built of sandstone in 1825. Distinctive balustrades were decorated with two boards. The city emblem on one and an inscription on another one. The inscription says that the bridge was built in honour of the czar Alexander I.



District Court Building

The classical building of the former Tribunal (today's District Court) was raised by order of the tsarist authorities in the years 1819-1823 according to a design prepared by the province architect S.Szpilowski.

Its eight-column portico is crowned with a triangular tympanum, under which there is a Latin sentence: "Suum Cuique" – "May all get their due".

It housed the Civic Guard, which was established in the summer of 1918 as a secret organization which was meant to maintain public order during the anticipated disarming of German soldiers and taking over power from them in the city.



"Dorothy" Tower with a piece of the city walls

It was built at the beginning of the 14th century, just behind the collegiate church under the invocation of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary.

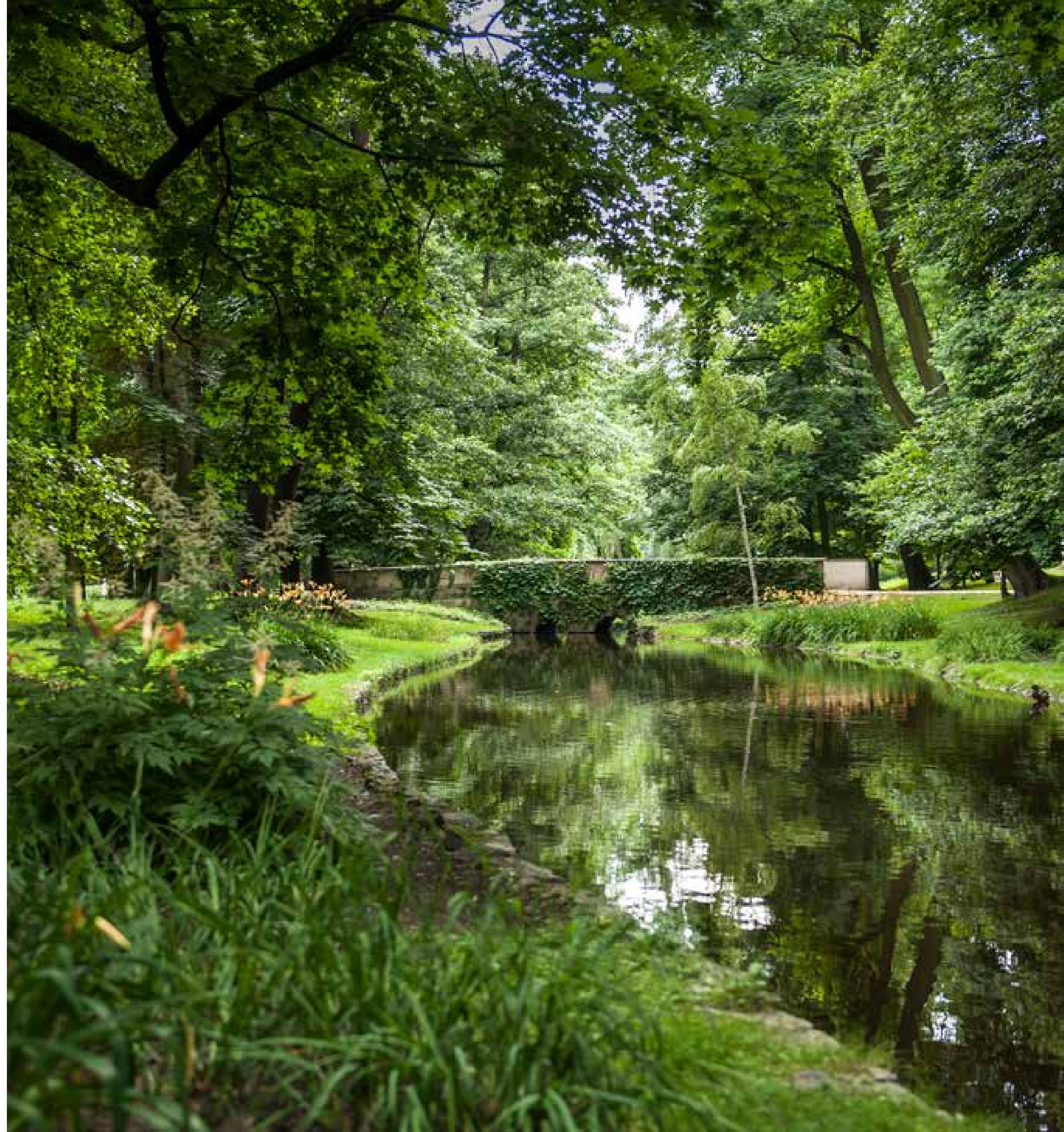
It served as a prison for insubordinate women. The city fortifications were erected by Casimir the Great between 1350 and 1361. The walls, built on an oval shape, were about 1600 metres long. They remained in good condition until the middle of the 17th century. However, by the late 18th century the walls were in ruins. To avoid collapsing of the walls and to enable the city to develop, the walls were dismantled by Prussian who had occupied the city since the Second Partition of Poland.

Today, it is the seat of the Centre of Kalisz Fairy Tales and Legends.



City Park

It is one of the oldest and most beautiful parks in Poland. It was established in 1798 on Prussians initiative who ruled the city after the Second Partition of Poland in 1793. It was first called a savage garden. It was established in the area of city pastures and a beautiful renaissance Jesuit garden. The park has been changing. Nowadays it delights with its English style image. There are 4200 trees, including 65 monuments of nature. One of the most precious trees is a red oak called Asnyk's oak.



County Office

It is located in a building raised in the years 1586-1591 according to the design of J. M. Bernardoni for the Jesuits brought to Kalisz in 1583. In 1823-1824 it was rebuilt – according to the design of F. Reinstein – for the needs of administrative authorities and it still has this function. It is a classical, three-story building, raised on a horseshoe plan, with a facade facing the city park. In its central part there is a prominent, four-column Corinthian portico with a balcony and a triangular pediment. During the First World War, since the middle of 1918, this building housed the command of the German military district, headed by General von Sontag. On the morning of 11 November of the same year, lieutenant J. Ulrych (accompanied by Second Lieutenant S. Bieniecki) came here – on behalf of the Military Staff of the Kalisz Land – and demanded that the General hand him over the power in the city and county. He also demanded that German soldiers leave the building. They were disarmed by a group of scouts armed with firearms. They also hung an amaranth banner with a white eagle on the balcony, and the people gathered in front of the building greeted it with the shouts: "Long live Poland!". This is how the first day of independence began in Kalisz.



Railway Station

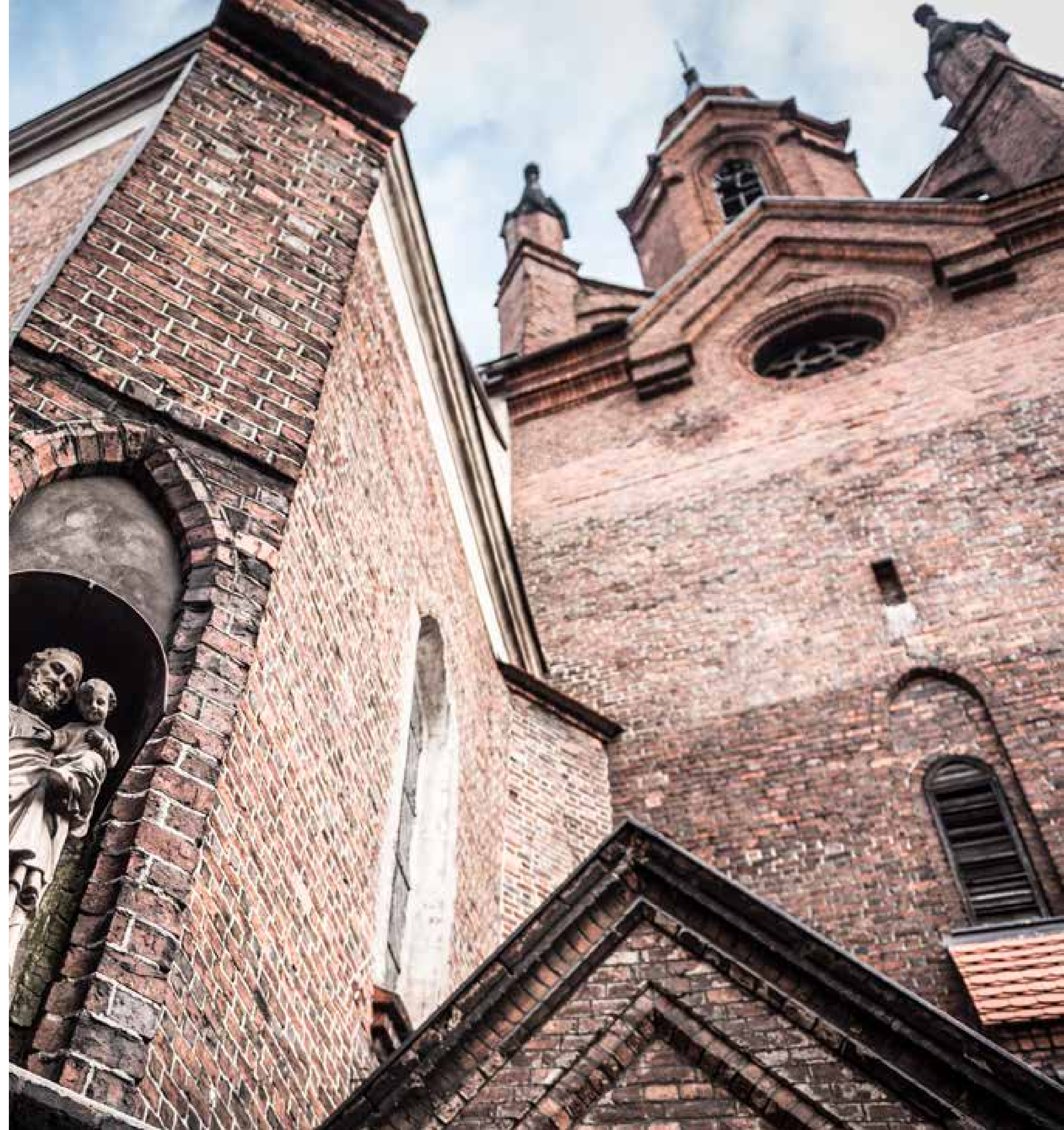
The Warsaw–Kalisz railway was built for three years, and the first train departed from Kalisz on 15 November 1902. The railway station was built in 1905 according to the design of C. Domaniewski. In 1906, this railway was connected to the German rail network.

On 27 May 1919 J. Piłsudski talked with General J. Dowbór-Muśnicki and General J. Haller at the station. As a result of these talks the Polish Army was established under the command of the future Marshal of Poland.



St. Nicholas Church

The gothic church founded in the second half of the thirteenth century by the Duke Bolesław the Pious, as the town's main temple. At the time the presbytery and one nave corpus were built. Around the fourteenth century the nave corpus was rebuilt and the tower was added to the western facade of the temple. In the year 1358 the temple was given into the care of the Canons Regular of the Lateran invited to Kalisz by King Casimir III the Great. It is the oldest preserved, brick residential building in Kalisz. The church was elevated to monastic collegiate status in 1441. In 1448 a monastery was built next to the church. Both buildings were destroyed by fire in 1560 and 1609. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Italian architect Albin Fontana rebuilt the temple. The nave was raised and a new vault with stucco decorations in the Lublin-Kalisz style was installed. The tower collapsed in the next fire of 1706. The temple has functioned as a parish church since the Canons Regular convent was dissolved in 1810. In the years 1869 – 1876 the church was renewed by Francis Tournell. The architect rebuilt the temple's tower in a neo-gothic style. During that time, both the vestry and capitulary were remoulded into the Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows (also known as the "Polish" chapel or as "Under the Eagles" chapel), which was decorated in 1909 with Włodzimierz Tetmajer's polychromy. The church was elevated to the rank of cathedral after the creation of the Kalisz diocese in 1992.



St. Joseph Square

The square was marked out in 1818 and was given the name of the New Market. In 1841, a monument to commemorate the meetings of the Prussian king with the Russian tsars was raised there, and the square was named Eugeniusz Square. It has had its current name since 1875.

On this square, on 1 December 1918, Lieutenant J. Ulrych – the commander of the Military Staff of the Kalisz Land (dissolved on 10 December of that year) and Second Lieutenant J. Łepkowski – commander of the 8th PMO District, said goodbye to some of the soldiers of the "Kalisz" regional regiment (later the 29th Infantry Regiment). They were going to the eastern front to fight in defense of Lviv. His commander was first Colonel J. Lewszecki, and then – since 12 December – Lieutenant Colonel K. Szemiot. On 13 December 1918 in the same place soldiers of the First Border Battalion made a military oath after a holy mass held in what was then a collegiate. Since the end of December 1918 they had been taking part in the Wielkopolskie Uprising.



The Franciscan Church

The gothic temple, founded in the thirteenth century by the Duke Bolesław the Pious and his wife blessed Yolanda – for the oldest Franciscan convent in Wielkopolska. The construction of the temple began with the presbytery and the neighbouring chapel. In the light of the recent research the chapel's presbytery – which served initially as the duke's oratorio – is the oldest part of the temple and was founded in 1257. The church has got a late renaissance, groin vault and perfectly preserved tracery, located in a window's niche on the eastern wall. In the second half of the thirteenth century, the triple nave corpus was added to the presbytery. The church suffered considerable damage from the fire in 1537 and 1559. The temple was rebuilt at the beginning of the seventeenth century, under the guidance of an Italian architect – Albin Fontana. It was done in a baroque manner, with a pargeted top and new vaults decorated in stucco, which is known as the Kalisz-Lublin style. In the interior there is a pulpit in the shape of a boat.



The Garrison Church

Former Jesuit Monastery. The founder of the church was the Archbishop of Gniezno – Stanisław Karnkowski. The church was built between 1592 and 1597. The early-baroque temple is believed to be the first not gothic church in Wielkopolska. The facade with the top and the renaissance portal with a coat of arms are pieces of architecture that draw attention. The church is a three-nave basilica with a short, closed, many-sided presbytery and galleries over the aisles. The short tower in the extended left aisle by the presbytery was built in the early seventeenth century as the first professional, astronomical observatory. It was used by a Belgian scholar and Jesuit writer – Karol Malapert. The presbytery is a resting place for notable people, including the founder of the Garrison Church – Abp. Stanisław Karnkowski, Primate of All Poland, and Krzysztof Czarnecki – the father of Stefan Czarnecki who was great Polish general and commander. The greatness of the Jesuit's church in Kalisz lasted till 1773 when the Jesuit Order was dissolved. Primate of All Poland – Ignacy Krasicki handed over the church to the protestant community of Kalisz in 1797. The protestants lost their claims to the temple in 1945. After the end of World War II, the church was handed over to Catholics and from that period to this day it has been known as the Garrison Church. Nowadays the church is the premises of the Roman Catholic Parish of Military Ordinariate under the invocation of St. Adalbert and St. Stanislaus.



The Jesuit Church

The late renaissance church was raised between 1594 – 1607 on the site of the original wooden temple which was built on the initiative of Primate Jan Gruszczyński for the Bernardine Order. The building was situated at the Kalisz tollhouse, outside the city walls, in line with St. Bernard's code. It consists of one-dimensional main nave with extended, many-sided presbytery. The interior with late baroque barrel vaults with lunettes covered with polychrome by Bernardine painter Walenty Żebrowski. The artist was noted for his monumental murals in Bernardine monasteries in Wchów, Warta, Warsaw. Illusionistic, uniform styled decoration matched the interior's general architectonic divisions. On the presbytery's ceiling the artist showed the apotheosis of Our Lady of Angels. In the nave – the Holy Trinity and the apotheosis of St. Francis. The polychrome's rich subject is full of symbols, metaphors and allegories – for that reason this piece of work is considered unique in artistic, iconographic and technological terms. In 1864 as a part of the repression after the January Uprising the Bernardine Order in Kalisz was dissolved and Church's administration was entrusted to diocese priests. In 1919 both the church and the monastery were taken over by Jesuits. In 1993 the church's historic interior was diversified by the painting of Jesus the Merciful. Thenceforth, the church has become a significant center of worship of God's Mercy. In 1998 it became the Temple of the Merciful Heart of Jesus.



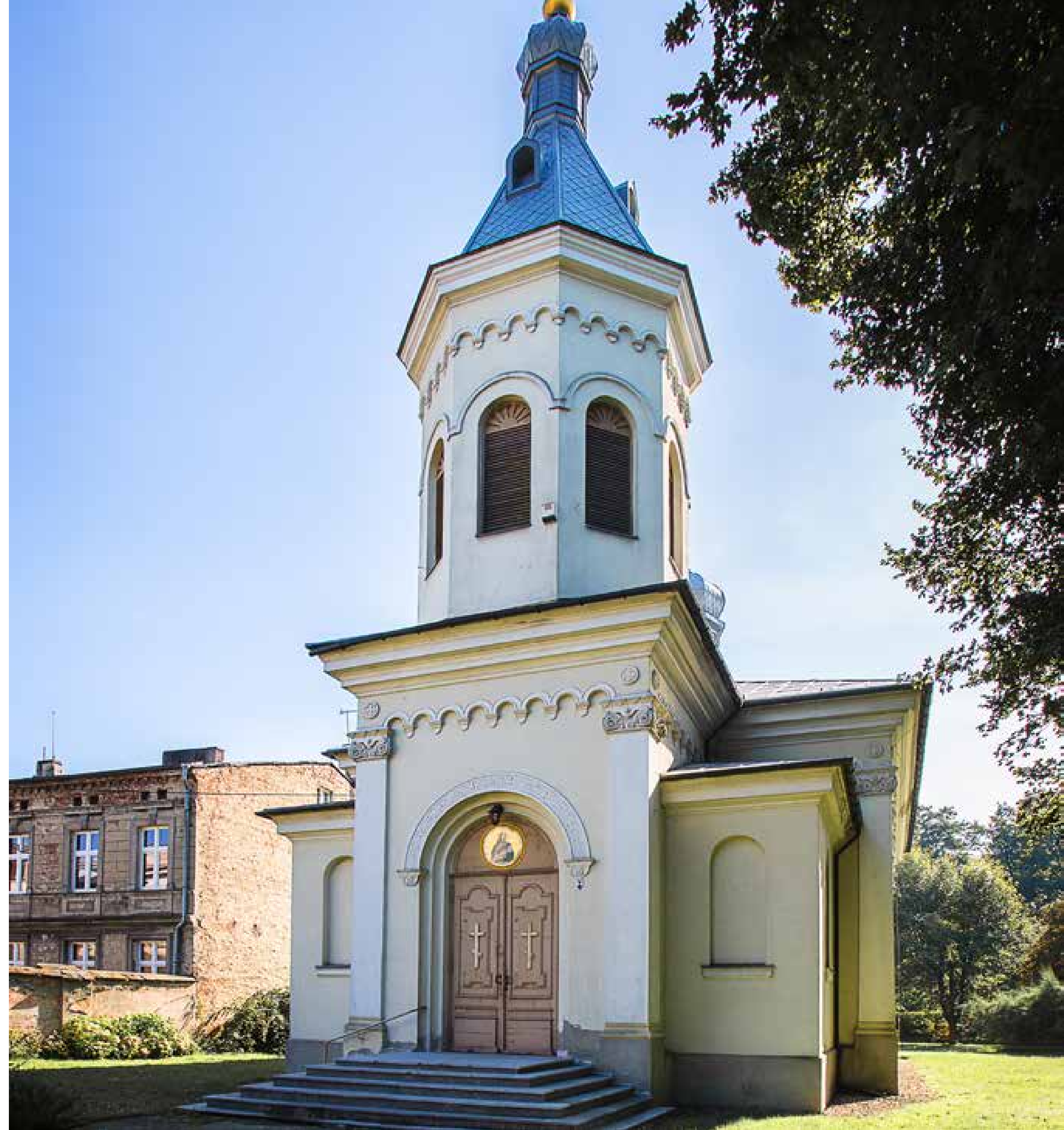
St. Family Church

This baroque church was built in the years 1665 – 1673 at the Kalisz tollhouse for the Order of Friars Minor. The temple's interior consists of one nave with a distinct, narrow presbytery. In the years 1728 – 1731 the Chapel of Our Lady of Knights (known also as Military Chapel) was built next to the church's nave. It was founded by a warrant officer – Piotr Sokolnicki. The church suffered a heavy damage in 1914 after Kalisz was shelled, bombed and burned down by the German Empire troops. The church was rebuilt in the years 1919 – 1921 by the Sisters of Nazareth who took over the monastery complex. The unitary furnishings made by a woodcarver – Joseph Eglauer and a rococo decor with the paintings by friar Bonifacy Jatkowski have preserved. Near the church there is a cemetery chapel of St. John Nepomucen.



Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

The Orthodox Church was raised in the years 1929 – 1930 by the design of an architect Michał Zenowicz. The construction materials were recycled from the remains of a demolished five-dome Orthodox Church which was located at St. Joseph Square until Poland regained independence in 1918. The previous, monumental Orthodox Church was built in 1877 by the order of Zarist authorities in Kalisz and was located in one of the most representative spot in the city, on the site of a former department store. The temple was associated with the Russian rule and it was demolished most likely for this reason. Inside the modest temple in Niecała Street there is an iconostasis – a cult-surrounded Icon of Our Lady, liturgical equipment and furnishings from the demolished predecessor. It serves to the followers of the Orthodox Church to this day and it is the only Orthodox Church building in this part of the Wielkopolska region.





Kalisz

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